

PRESS RELEASE

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Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 16, 2003

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CONYERS AND BERMAN INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO PROTECT AGAINST ONLINE THREATS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee and Congressman Howard Berman, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on the Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property issued the following statements regarding today's introduction of H.R. 2752 the "Author, Consumer, and Computer Owner Protection and Security Act of 2003" (ACCOPS Act). The ACCOPS Act provides authors, consumers, and computer owners with much-needed protection against several online threats.

Congressman Conyers said, "Digital piracy is one of the biggest problems facing creators of copyrighted content. Even though the artists, authors, actors, movie companies, software developers, publishers, and record studios create this country's number one export, they are suffering because people are taking advantage of technology to share and obtain their valuable content for free. On top of that, much of this new technology is creating security and privacy risks for everyday computer users.

Conyers continued, "While existing laws have been useful in stemming this problem, they simply do not go far enough. That is why Congressman Berman, myself and other Judiciary Committee members are introducing legislation to give consumers, law enforcement, and content creators the tools they need to protect their rights."

Congressman Berman said, "Authors, consumers and computer owners face a dizzying array of online threats to their livelihoods, privacy and security. These activities run the gamut from identity theft, distribution of child pornography, and unlicensed drug sales to stalking, fraud, trademark counterfeiting, and copyright piracy.

Berman continued, "Law enforcement authorities need additional resources and statutory authority to effectively deal with this rash of online scams, crimes, and illegalities. The ACCOPS Act will go a long way to providing law enforcement with the tools they need."

The bill:

- Gives law enforcement additional anti-piracy tools, such as additional funds and increased information sharing amongst domestic and international enforcement agencies.
- Clarifies that uploading a single digital content file to a publicly-accessible computer network qualifies as a felony under the copyright laws.
- Says file-sharing websites must get consent from consumers who download their software if the software takes over their computers either to search other computers for content or to store files.
- Makes it a Federal offense to provide misleading contact information when registering a domain name with knowledge and with fraudulent intent. It also requires the courts to consider this conduct as evidence of willful conduct in criminal copyright cases.
- Makes it a Federal offense to camcord a movie in a theater without authorization.

